

THE LEISURE HOUR

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—Cowper.



A GLIMPSE OF CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

THE EXILE'S TRUST:

A TALE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

CHAPTER IV.

By the faint light, and his knowledge of the place, Jules found his own corner, and sat down upon the straw. He heard some of his fellow-prisoners move as if disturbed, and one say, "What can that be?" but in a minute or two all was still again, and he was left to his own meditations. They were dreary enough. The brave spirit in which he had answered Chamone, and almost defied his employer, ebbed away in the darkness

and silence of the prison-room. He knew that Chamone had been talking to frighten him; but how much of that talk might prove true the poor forest peasant could not tell. One thing was clear: Renne was determined to get the lands and the château of Devigne, and, whether as count or citizen, Renne had never been known to give up anything he had in view. For a moment it seemed to Jules the best and wisest course to accept his offer; for, notwithstanding Chamone's farewell, he had a notion that it would be repeated. The prospect of going back to his old farm in the forest country, safe and free from the dreary prison and the dread of the Convention, to work

in his own fields and sit by his own fireside once more, with his little daughter and his kindly household, was too fair to be resisted, and Jules almost made up his mind to request another interview with Chamone, and give his full consent to Renne's proposed bargain. But then came recollections of the absent *Sieur*, his good lord, his early friend, whose house and land he would be selling away from him and his to their hereditary enemy, never to be reclaimed or bought back when the good quiet times should come again, and all things be as they were in his youth—that was Jules's idea of the regeneration of the land, which so much occupied his fellow-prisoners as well as the men of the Convention. He thought of the far-off days when himself and Devigne played together on the green banks of La Brice; of the brides they had brought home, so young and fair; of the dead they had laid down in the old churchyard; and of the solemn trust that had been confided to him among the tombs. Then Father Bernard's face, so wan and yet so full of peace and wisdom, seemed to rise out of the darkness with the warning words he had spoken when Jules sat by his bedside in that soft evening of spring. The good nurse, Ninette, who had stepped into the priest's vacant place as Jules's counsellor, who knew the secret compact between him and the *Sieur*, what would she think or say when he went home after concluding such a bargain, and what would she advise him to do if they could but talk together? and up to his memory rose her farewell words, "Put your trust in God, and fear not the wrath of man." Jules had been fighting a fierce battle with fortune and temptation on that heap of straw; but many a moral victory has been gained in as poor a field; and the day was won by that last resolve of his, "I will trust, and I will not fear." He said to himself, "Let them take my life, but they shall not get Devigne's possessions from me; Providence will protect my child, and when the good times come back, and Lucelle has grown a woman, it will be her pride among our forest people that her father died rather than betray his trust."

With that brave resolution Jules looked up, and saw the grey light of the winter morning creep in through the grated windows, and wondered how many more mornings he had to see. But the day passed without a summons to trial for him. Another and another came and went, and his prison life went on as heretofore. When names were called at the door he listened for his own, but never heard it, and at length got tired of listening. Had Jules known the true state of his own case, or the men he had to deal with, he would not have listened at all; the Disposer of Events, to whom he was looking for help, had provided for his safety in a way he knew not.

On the night when he was taken from his home and family, the small household remained for some minutes overwhelmed with grief and consternation. Then Jean Closnet once more seized his trusty axe and rushed to the door, saying he would rouse the men of St. Renne to rescue their good neighbour from those wolves of strangers.

"There is not one of them would strike a blow against the messengers of the Convention," said Ninette, as she held little Lucelle in her arms, and the child sobbed as if her heart would break; "they would be quite sure that Jules had done something against the Republic, or he could not be arrested, and the band would turn and shoot you for attempting to rouse the people against them. But I'll tell you what to do, Jean—follow them as quietly as you can, and keep well out of sight till you see how and where they take him;

then go and tell all our neighbours what has happened; for all the kindness Jules showed to many of them in sickness and hard times, may be they will help us to watch against the still more wicked bands who might come to burn his house and slay his family, as they have done in other places with no greater cause. If none of them will help, we have still a Providence to trust in. Don't cry, Lucelle, your father will come back safe; I don't think they have a case against him; but pray to your Father above, my child, to protect both him and us."

Jean was accustomed to mind what the *Sieur's* nurse said: he went out accordingly, axe in hand, and followed the company of red-caps, keeping well in the shade, till he saw them embark in the boat on the river; and then Jean roused every house in the forest village with his cry, "Your good neighbour, Jules Dubois, has been arrested, though he has done no wrong, and we know not who may come against his house." The men of the village turned out, all with torches, and some with weapons, but, as Ninette predicted, not one of them would attempt a rescue.

"If Jules Dubois be an honest man, as we believe him," they said, "and no tool of the people's enemy Devigne, he will be honourably acquitted, and sent home by the Convention; we will protect his house against all robbers, and tell Citizen Renne to see justice done to him in Paris, for Jules has been a good neighbour to us all."

They chose a patrol from among themselves, to watch over the *château*. The family slept little that night, but the place remained undisturbed.

Next morning they went in a body to their favourite citizen in his "crow's nest," acquainted him with what had happened, and conjured him to see justice done to their good neighbour, at the same time declaring their determination to guard the house and land, which they believed Jules had honestly bought, till the contrary was proved before the Convention, and he was found guilty of being Devigne's agent. Citizen Renne was much astonished at the intelligence, he said; though some doubt had crept into his mind regarding the possession of the *château*, which, they would all allow, was a circumstance suspicious enough to arrest the attention of such a devoted servant of the Republic as himself; yet, on their testimony he now believed Jules Dubois to be a loyal citizen, and should certainly make it his business to seek out the good man's accuser, and confront him before the supreme tribunal in Paris. He also applauded to the skies their neighbourly resolution to watch over Dubois's house and land; such respect for right and justice was worthy of the forest men. They went home applauding Citizen Renne with no less vehemence, but not aware that the said resolution was the only part of the business that surprised and annoyed him too; for it made an attempt to take forcible possession of the *château* a very unsafe step, and Citizen Renne had meditated something of the kind. The first French Revolution, amid all its excesses and crimes, had this redeeming feature—that its fanatical leaders and ferocious mobs alike despised and hated the covetous heart and hand. People might commit any sin but that which brought them gain. Most of the men who filled France with bloodshed and terror lived and died poor; and Danton, after dividing the supreme power and wickedness with Robespierre, came to the guillotine through nothing but his attempts to enrich himself.

This contempt of worldly acquisition, at once so noble and so rare in any age, still casts a fitful gleam on that fearful time; but it stood sadly in the way of Citizen

Renne's designs on the house and lands of Dèvigne. It barred his path in Paris, as well as in the forest country. On learning from his instrument Chamone what clear evidence of honest purchase Jules had to show, he felt that an acquittal would be the most likely result of his appearance before the Convention. Nobody had an interest in accusing the Norman peasant but himself; and even a *protégé* of Marat could not run the risk of accusing a man whose estate he was known to covet. But Citizen Renne had other means at his disposal. There was no difficulty in shutting up the simple, peaceable man of the forest among the prisoners in the Abbey. Its classically-named gaoler knew better than to make himself an enemy in the Marat faction, to which he owed his post, by appearing too scrupulous in the case of a friendless peasant; and Renne trusted to the dreary walls and grated windows for making Jules willing to sell house and land to him on his own terms. Among the weary inhabitants of the Abbey there were doubtless those who owed their prolonged imprisonment to similar causes. But Jules never guessed why he was not summoned to trial after Chamone's embassy had failed. Renne still trusted to the prison walls and bars for tiring out the patience and breaking down the spirit of the Norman forester. So weeks and months were allowed to pass away without a variation as regarded Jules, except that at long intervals Chamone reappeared at the prison door or in the outer passage, and he was summoned, as Citizen Brutus said, to see the best friend he had in the world but him. Then Chamone would say, "Jules, that flower of citizens once more makes you his most generous offer. Are you prepared to accept it with delight?" And Jules would answer quietly, "I will not sell my house and land;" upon which Chamone would repeat his affecting farewell and go his way, but only to return with the same formula some weeks after.

Jules was always glad to see him; for, besides the generous offer and the affecting farewell, he brought news of the home and family far away in St. Renne. According to his own account, Chamone had either been there or seen somebody from the forest country; and the news was always good: all the household were well, all the village was flourishing; but Chamone generally added how particularly promising the fields of Dubois's old farm appeared, and how much his little Lucelle fretted and pined for her absent father. The truth was, that the forest men did not forget their honest and kindly neighbour. The family he had left in the château kept Jules in their remembrance. There was nobody in all the village who could write; and, even if they had reached him, letters would have been of no great use to Jules; but the peasants who went to market at Alençon or Domfront carried tokens of affection for the absent man, or messages regarding him to be transmitted to Citizen Renne by any obliging traveller bound for Paris. Most travellers were obliging enough to take charge of the like for a man so high in favour with the dominant and dreaded faction; and Renne took care to send back suitable responses through his own agents. The family were always hearing from Jules; he was safe and well, and likely to get home soon; but sometimes one form of law, and sometimes another, had to be gone through, and hindered his immediate return.

Most of those legal obstacles had long ago been swept away by the Revolution, and some of them never existed; but they served to keep the simple household and the forest men quiet, and every message wound up with the praises of his good friend Citizen Renne, and the reliance

which not only his family but the entire village ought to place in him. "He and his have been always more friendly to the house and lands of Dèvigne than ever they were to their owners," Ninette would say, when they talked over these messages at the home fireside; "but it may be that He in whose hands are the hearts of men, will make him of service to our good Jules." But the nurse never ventured on such remarks beyond the walls of the château. The men of the village firmly believed in Renne's kindness and care of their old neighbour, who had got into trouble through buying the aristocrat's land, and the citizen's popularity rose higher than ever among them.

Poor Jules! it was well for the peace of his honest and much-tried mind that he knew nothing of the use made of his name, and the deceit practised on his people. His burden was heavy enough without it, as the long weary months rolled away unvaried, except by the visits of Chamone with those scraps of intelligence from home, too well made up to impose on the shrewd peasant, by the going of old prisoners and the coming of new ones, till himself and his Breton friend were all that remained of the first company. He saw the days lengthen through those high grated windows; he knew that spring had come to the forest; and his dreams went back to the tall trees breaking into leaf, to the violets springing up by thousands at their mossy roots, and the birds singing in their branches. In the dull light and heavy air of the prison, he thought of the sunshine flashing through the woods and glancing on the river; of the breeze that blew over his own orchard, now in a flush of blossoms, or came laden with the scents of wild flowers from the meadows. Was his little Lucelle gathering those wild flowers now, as she used to do, and did she run to meet Jean Closnet coming home from the fields as she used to meet her father in the evenings of other springs? And Jules's thrifty mind would turn to the crops of wheat, barley, and peas that ought to be in process of cultivation on the land he had run such risk for, and wonder how Jean and the rest of his people were managing them in his absence. But the spring went and the summer came, and he was still in the Abbey; Paris grew hot and dry under its flood of sunshine, which caught no shadow from the sins and sorrows below; the prison room grew close and stifling; the Breton peasant talked in his sleep of the sea that washed the white sands of St. Malo, and the streams that flowed down to it through his growing corn; and Jules Dubois was getting so tired of the stone walls, and so changed by his stay within them, that he was preparing to curse the Convention and shout for Louis XVII some day, in hopes of a release, though it should be by the guillotine.

The fable of the old man and death was illustrated in his case, however, when, one morning earlier than the usual hour of such summonses, Jules heard his own name called by Citizen Brutus at the prison door. With a vague feeling of fear he rose and followed the gaoler, who, after securing the door, led him out into the courtyard; nobody seemed astir about the Abbey, and the prison watchers were pacing the last of their rounds, but on the stone bench hard by the massive gate sat Chamone, looking sober and thoughtful.

"Have you got your papers, friend?" he said, after bidding Jules good morning in his old familiar way.

"I always keep them about me," said Jules.

"That's well, and will save time. Citizen Renne wishes to see them and you at his own house before the hours of public business, with which he is so much occupied. So come along; a walk through the fresh

morning air will be something new, and not disagreeable to you now, I suspect. Open the gate for us, Citizen Brutus; you are losing one lamb of your flock a little before the time."

The gaoler smiled cynically as he opened and looked again, and Jules found himself marching along the streets with Chamone, who had taken and kept a fast hold of his arm. The precaution was unnecessary: Jules would as soon have thought of attempting to take wing as of making his escape; he could have found his way anywhere in the forest country, but in the great town he was at sea without a compass. What direction they took he knew not; the streets were all strange to him, and still more strange seemed the manner of his conductor. Chamone, generally so talkative and self-important, walked on without uttering a word, or even looking up, till, as they passed a house at the gate of which several persons appeared to be waiting and talking to the porter, he said abruptly, "There is the residence of Renne's friend, Citizen Marat. You see how many people are waiting at his gate with petitions or reports. I dare say before the rest of Paris have got their eyes open he will be making his toilet for the Convention—it meets early to-day—and thinking how many heads he should call for. That's the man to have for a friend in these times; and Renne can count upon him for anything he wants done, you understand."

"Do you think that Citizen Renne is going to take up my cause now?" inquired Jules, taking the first advantage of his communicative turn.

"I don't know," said Chamone, looking to the ground again; "that matter must rest between him and you. I have done all I can, and I mean to wash my hands of you both."

"Indeed!" said Jules; but as he spoke, a female voice behind him said, "Pardon me, sir; can you direct me to the house of Citizen Marat?" The accent made Jules turn quickly round, for it was of his native province; and the speaker was a young woman in the Norman costume, tall and handsome, but with a look of settled sadness in her fair face, and a paper in her hand, which he guessed to be a petition to the man of power for the life of a friend, perhaps of a husband.

"There's the house," said Jules, pointing out the one Chamone had pointed out to him; for, except the people at its gate, there was nobody in all the quiet street but themselves. "Are you of Normandy?" he added; but the young woman was too intent on her own affairs to hear or answer him; she walked quickly away, and he saw her go in at the gate, while Chamone hurried on, muttering, "The girl might save herself the trouble of petitioning in that quarter." His walk became more rapid every minute; he turned up one street and down another, then back again and into a narrow lane, such as abounded in old Paris, and formed short cuts between the different parts of the town. There Chamone stood stock still, looked up and down the lane to see that nobody was coming, and said:—

"Jules, I don't know what to do with you. I can't take you into the wolf's den; I know Renne means no good this morning, by having you brought to that out-of-the-way old house where he meets his friends; those honest people who stir up the Faubourg St. Antoine, set on the rag-gatherers to call for heads, and do any little business that can't be done by the guillotine. Jules, I don't know what things are coming to in France;" and he leaned against the wall, and looked round him once more. "No life is safe with these men; not the man who has done his best or worst to serve

them, like myself. Renne threatened me last night for not bringing you to terms, and now he means to dispose of you first and me secondly."

"If we could both get back to the forest country, and tell them the truth, the forest men would stand by us," said Jules.

"May be they would; but how are we to get back, you Norman goose? His agents would have us before we had got a league on the northern road. If you had sold that cursed land of Devigne's in time——"

"I could not," stammered Jules.

"No! you could not;" and Chamone's voice sank to a whisper, "because you hold it in trust for him. I know you do, Jules Dubois. Nobody told me, but I know it, and man will never hear it from me. I respect you from my heart for being faithful and true. Had I been so myself, I should have never come to the evil doings that have made me what I am. But, Jules, I'll get you safe home, if I should die for it; and when you get back to St. Renne, be sure you tell the child that I kept my promise; and the nurse Ninette, be sure to tell her too. But come along; I have made up my mind to break faith with Renne; I know what he means to do with me. If we can only get the length of Peronet's house, and find him at home, I'll tell him the whole story; and, for the hatred he bears to Renne, I have no doubt he will take your cause in hand."

"Who is Peronet?" said Jules, growing dizzy with the feeling that his secret was known to such a man.

"Another of the same kind," said Chamone, hurrying him along; "he and Renne started on the race for power together; they were both Norman deputies to the States-General. I think he comes from Beauvais; but Renne has got nearest to the winning-post, so Peronet hates him. We must cross here. What can this be about?" he continued, as the lane suddenly opened on a wide street, into which a crowd was rushing from all sides with a clamour of wild cries and faces of fierce excitement, while a company of gendarmes, with a woman in their custody, opened a passage with drawn sabres through the furious mob.

"Keep close to me, and say nothing to anybody," said Chamone, as he dashed across the street, and Jules was following him, when his eye was caught by the Norman cap which the arrested woman wore, and another glance showed him that she was the very same he had directed to the house of Citizen Marat. He heard the crowd cry "murderess" at her; and the poor forest man's look of amazed recognition was too marked to escape their eyes. Jules felt a dozen hands laid upon him; he made one wild effort to break away and follow Chamone, but Chamone was no longer to be seen. Some cried "To the lantern!" and some "To the river!" with him; others shouted "Bring the accomplice before the Convention!" and, seized by arms, collar, and hair, Jules was dragged along, half strangled and nearly unconscious; and when he could either breathe or see, he was in a guard-room, surrounded by gendarmes, two of whom were diligently searching his person. They took from him all the appliances he had carried so far and relied on so long—his forest-knife, his snuff-box of deer's-horn, his crimson leather purse, with thirty livres and five sous good money of Louis xv's coinage in it; and the goat's-skin pocket-book, made by his own hands and containing his valued papers. Jules thought all was lost to him and his, when he saw that pocket-book eagerly seized by a man who stood by, and appeared to be in authority. He opened it, pulled out the papers, glanced over them, and demanded his name, his age, his native place, and why he came to Paris.

Jules was answering the last of these questions, to the great man's evident bewilderment. "In the Abbey since November! And where were you going when the people arrested you?" said he.

But at that moment the tumult, which still continued outside, was increased by shouts for the brave Citizen Peronet; and a tall man, with close cropped hair and a shabby blue coat, but whom Jules judged by his look to be a Norman gentleman, stepped in, saying, "Citizen Prefect, as a member of the Convention and the Committee of Inquiry, I take upon myself to examine this man. Being of Normandy, I know how to get the truth out of Normans."

The members of the Convention were not to be gained by any civic authority; the prefect at once put the papers into Citizen Peronet's hands, and the latter, making a sign to a clerk who sat at a desk in a corner, to bring Jules with him, stepped into an inner office, where there was nobody but the three, seated himself, and said, "Now, my good fellow, tell me your story, and for the sake of old Normandy I will assist you out of this scrape; that is," he added, looking at the clerk, who sat with book and pen ready, "if you can prove yourself to be an honest citizen." The judicial practice of France has always differed from that of England, in permitting private examinations of the accused before his public trial; and this custom, having survived both law and government, allowed Citizen Peronet to improve the occasion for his own purposes. But Jules had heard his name shouted by the people outside, and recognised in him the man who, according to Chamone's report, would take his case in hand because he hated Renne. So Jules related from point to point the whole history of his being arrested on a false accusation, brought to Paris, and kept in the Abbey; how Chamone had come time after time with offers from Renne to buy his land, and threats because he refused to sell; how he had been brought out of prison that morning because Renne wanted to see him and his papers; how the house of Citizen Marat had been pointed out to him; how the Norman woman came behind him inquiring for it; how he had directed her to the house, knowing only that she was a stranger, and from his native province; and how much he had been astonished at seeing her so soon after in the hands of the gendarmes, when he lost sight of Chamone, and the people seized upon him, for what he could not tell.

"Ah, my good fellow, it is not as safe to show one's surprise in the streets of Paris as in the by-ways of your forest country," said Peronet, "nor to direct strangers either. It was Chamone who gave the direction, of course;" and he glanced at the clerk, who directly tore a page out of the book and wrote another; "you are an innocent man, and have been made the victim of oppression by one of those selfish men who disgrace the Republic; but I will see justice done you, and if you are prudent you will get safe home; but remember, say nothing about yourself speaking to the Norman woman—it is a trifle, but it might compromise your life just at present." Jules promised to abide by that counsel, and poured out his thanks for the citizen's kindness; but he also remembered to say nothing about the conversation between himself and Chamone regarding the citizen's motives; and the latter, after a few more questions, to make the case clear, walked out, with the clerk, the book, and the papers, committing him to the care of two gendarmes in the guard-room, with orders not to lose sight of or let any one speak to the prisoner. Determined to preserve a safe silence on his own part, Jules sat down in a corner. He heard the crowd outside

again shout for Citizen Peronet, and cry death to somebody whose name he could not catch, as they moved away like a passing storm; but, though his guards looked easy and civil, he did not venture to ask the smallest explanation of the strange doings in which he had got involved, and sat there almost motionless, he knew not how long, till some one at the door said, "Jules Dubois," and the men told him he was going before the Convention.

It was but a step from the guard-room, which, indeed, formed part of the same building, to the hall, where that powerful and dreaded assembly held its sittings. In a minute or two Jules stood, with other prisoners and their guards, in a space appropriated for those who were awaiting their turn for trial and sentence. He could see the high seats of the Mountain, as the fiercest men of the Revolution were called, from occupying them, the tribunal from which people were denounced, and the bar at which the king, the queen, and the noblest blood of France had stood and been condemned. There was one standing at it as he looked up, and Jules did not venture a second look, for he recognised once more the tall handsome woman, with the fair sad face and Norman accent. Poor prudent Jules had a strong desire to get back to his quiet village, his home, and his household, and little sympathy with the heroic in thought or action; yet in long after years he recollected, and was accustomed to relate with something like emotion, how the Norman maid stood unmoved at the dreadful bar, and calmly avowed that, for the sake of the brave blood he had shed, she had stabbed Citizen Marat in his house that morning; that she had left her Norman home for the purpose; that she had no accomplices, and would die cheerfully, having rid her country of one of its worst tyrants; and Jules remembered, as all time will, that the name of that Norman maid was Charlotte Corday.

THE EARLY YEARS OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE CONSORT.*

THE history of this remarkable volume may be told in few words. It was originally compiled by General Grey, under her Majesty's direction, and with the aid of memoranda from her Majesty's own hand. It was intended solely "for private circulation among the members of her own family, or such other persons as, from the relation in which they had stood to her Majesty or the Prince Consort himself, would naturally be interested in the story of his early days." Notwithstanding this privacy, however, some fear was entertained lest a copy of the volume might be surreptitiously obtained, and published in a garbled form, and it was thought that it might be prudent to avert this danger. But another motive prompted the publication of the volume, which will be best described in the words of the preface itself:—"Acting upon the opinion of several persons in whose judgment she had the greatest confidence; believing also that the free and unreserved expression which the volume contains of her own feelings, as well as of those of the Prince, is such as, if made public (however unusual such publicity may be), will command the entire sympathy of every one whose sympathy or good opinion is to be desired; and, above all, feeling that there is not one word, coming from the Prince himself, which will not tend to a better and higher

* "The Early Years of his Royal Highness the Prince Consort." Compiled under the direction of her Majesty the Queen, by Lieut.-General the Hon. C. Grey. London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 65, Cornhill. 1867.

appreciation of his great character, the Queen has not hesitated to give her consent to the present publication."

The original design of the work, and the limited circulation at first proposed, sufficiently will account for the prominence given to certain details that were intended for the perusal of her Majesty's family and the Prince's personal friends. But the Queen has acted a generous and self-denying part in not withdrawing these details, on allowing the book to be published to the wide world. "Every one whose sympathy or good opinion is to be desired" will thank her Majesty for presenting so complete and so true a portraiture of the Prince in his early life. The book more than justifies all the respect and admiration in which the Prince's character is held by the nation. More now than ever will the world do homage to the memory of "Albert the Good."

The lineage, birth, education, and early history of the Prince have already been fully narrated in the "Leisure Hour,"* and for details on these subjects the reader must be referred to the volume recently published.

The part of the book which will have now the widest and warmest interest is that relating to the marriage between the Queen and the Prince Consort. From their earliest years, the hope of this marriage was cherished by the Duchess Dowager of Coburg, who was their common grandmother. The two children, "The flower of May" in England, and Albert at Rosenau, were constantly connected in her thoughts. Moreover, she cannot have made this idea any secret, for the Prince, in after years, told the Queen that his nurse used to chatter to him about this destiny; and that, when he first thought of marriage at all, he always thought of her. But the King of the Belgians seems to have been more concerned than any one else in bringing the marriage about. From the first, he discerned in the Prince the qualities which fitted him for such a position; and in 1836 Baron Stockmar, the Prince's faithful friend in after years, wrote to the King to express a similar opinion. The arrangement encountered, nevertheless, a good deal of opposition. King William IV was very much averse to it, and tried, it is said, everything to prevent it. No less than five marriages were contemplated for the young Princess, and King William desired more especially to marry her to Prince Alexander of the Netherlands, brother to the present King of Holland. With these views he endeavoured to prevent the visit of the Duke of Coburg to England in 1836, but without success; and after this visit the marriage was very generally expected, though, as the Queen tells us, nothing had as yet been arranged. At length, early in 1838, the King of the Belgians seems to have mentioned the subject to the Queen. At least, in March of that year he spoke openly to Prince Albert on the subject, and, of course, with the Queen's cognisance. The

* "Leisure Hour," Nos. 465, 468, and 532. In the "Sunday at Home," No. 405, a paper appeared giving an account of the religious character, and the last illness of the Prince. In the volume before us it is gratifying to find such references to his devout feeling, even in early life, as appear in the following extracts:—

"Deeply imbued with a conviction of the great truths of Christianity, his religion went far beyond mere forms, to which, indeed, he attached no especial importance. It was not with him a thing to be taken up and ostentatiously displayed with almost Pharisaical observance, on certain days, or at certain seasons, or on certain formal occasions. It was part of himself. It was engrafted in his very nature, and directed his everyday life."

This referred to the time of his confirmation. Again:—

"Baster of 1840 was spent at Windsor, when the Queen and Prince took the sacrament together for the first time, in St. George's Chapel. 'The Prince,' the Queen says, 'had a very strong feeling about the solemnity of this act, and did not like to appear in company either the evening before or on the day on which he took it, and he and the Queen almost always dined alone on these occasions.'"

prospect of delay was strongly opposed by Prince Albert and his father; and the Prince himself states that, when he came over in 1839, he intended to have told the Queen that, unless she made up her mind, he must withdraw from the affair.* His anxiety, however, was unnecessary. He reached Windsor on the 10th of October, and was engaged on the 15th.

How this engagement took place is told in the following extract:—

"After a few minutes' conversation on other subjects, the Queen told him why she had sent for him: and we can well understand any little hesitation and delicacy she may have felt in doing so; for the Queen's position, making it imperative that any proposal of marriage should come first from her, must necessarily appear a painful one to those who, deriving their ideas on this subject from the practice of private life, are wont to look upon it as the privilege and happiness of a woman to have her hand sought in marriage, instead of having to offer it herself.

"How the Prince received the offer will appear best from the following few lines, which he wrote the next day to the old friend of his family, Baron Stockmar, who was naturally one of the first to be informed of his engagement:—'I write to you,' he says, 'on one of the happiest days of my life, to give you the most welcome news possible; and, having then described what took place, he proceeds: 'Victoria is so good and kind to me that I am often at a loss to believe that such affection should be shown to me. I know the great interest you take in my happiness, and therefore pour out my heart to you.' And he ends by saying: 'More, or more seriously, I cannot write to you; for that, at this moment, I am too bewildered.'"

"The Queen herself says that the Prince received her offer without any hesitation, and with the warmest demonstration of kindness and affection; and, after a natural expression of her feeling of happiness, her

* King Leopold thus wrote to Baron Stockmar, after his interview with the Prince in 1838:—

"I have had a long conversation with Albert, and have put the whole case honestly and kindly before him. He looks at the question from its most elevated and honourable point of view. He considers that troubles are inseparable from all human positions, and that therefore, if one must be subject to plagues and annoyances, it is better to be so for some great or worthy object than for trifles and miseries. I have told him that his great youth would make it necessary to postpone the marriage for a few years. . . . I found him very sensible on all these points. But one thing he observed with truth: 'I am ready,' he said, 'to submit to this delay, if I have only some certain assurance to go upon. But if, after waiting, perhaps for three years, I should find that the Queen no longer desired the marriage, it would place me in a very ridiculous position, and would, to a certain extent, ruin all the prospects of my future life.'"

In reference to the supposed hesitation of the Queen at this period, an important memorandum is here introduced:—

"The Queen never entertained any idea of this, and she afterwards repeatedly informed the Prince that she would never have married any one else. She expresses, however, great regret that she had not, after her accession, kept up her correspondence with her cousin, as she had done before it.

"Nor can the Queen now," she adds, "think without indignation against herself of her wish to keep the Prince waiting for probably three or four years, at the risk of ruining all his prospects for life, until she might feel inclined to marry! And the Prince has since told her that he came over in 1839 with the intention of telling her that if she could not then make up her mind she must understand that he could not now wait for a decision, as he had done at a former period when this marriage was first talked about."

"The only excuse the Queen can make for herself is in the fact that the sudden change from the secluded life at Kensington to the independence of her position as Queen Regnant, at the age of eighteen, put all ideas of marriage out of her mind, which she now most bitterly repents."

"A worse school for a young girl, or one more detrimental to all natural feelings and affections, cannot well be imagined than the position of a Queen at eighteen, without experience and without a husband to guide and support her. This the Queen can state from painful experience, and she thanks God that none of her dear daughters are exposed to such danger."

Majesty adds, in the fervour and sincerity of her heart, with the straightforward simplicity that marks all the entries in her journal: 'How I will strive to make him feel as little as possible the great sacrifice he has made! I told him it was a great sacrifice on his part, but he would not allow it. I then told him to fetch Ernest, which he did, who congratulated us both, and seemed very happy. He told me how perfect his brother was.'

On the same day the Queen described her own feelings in a letter to King Leopold:—

"Windsor Castle, Oct. 15, 1839.

"My dearest Uncle,—This letter will, I am sure, give you pleasure, for you have always shown and taken so warm an interest in all that concerns me. My mind is quite made up, and I told Albert this morning of it. The warm affection he showed me on learning this, gave me great pleasure. He seems perfection, and I think that I have the prospect of very great happiness before me. I love him more than I can say, and shall do everything in my power to render this sacrifice (for such, in my opinion, it is) as small as I can. He seems to have great tact—a very necessary thing in his position. These last few days have passed like a dream to me, and I am so much bewildered by it all that I know hardly how to write; but I do feel very happy. It is absolutely necessary that this determination of mine should be known to no one but yourself and to Uncle Ernest, until after the meeting of Parliament, as it would be considered otherwise neglectful on my part not to have assembled Parliament at once to inform them of it.

"Lord Melbourne, whom I have, of course, consulted about the whole affair, quite approves my choice, and expresses great satisfaction at this event, which he thinks in every way highly desirable.

"Lord Melbourne has acted in this business, as he has always done towards me, with the greatest kindness and affection. We also think it better, and Albert quite approves of it, that we should be married very soon after Parliament meets, about the beginning of February.

"Pray, dearest Uncle, forward these two letters to Uncle Ernest, to whom I beg you will enjoin strict secrecy, and explain these details, which I have not time to do, and to faithful Stockmar. I think you might tell Louise of it, but none of her family.

"I wish to keep the dear young gentleman here till the end of next month. Ernest's sincere pleasure gives me great delight. He does so adore dearest Albert.

"Ever, dearest Uncle, your devoted Niece,

"V. R."

King Leopold's answer to this is in the same homely and affectionate strain which characterises all that we hear of him in this volume, and it shows how much his heart had been set upon the marriage:—

"October 24, 1839.

"My dearest Victoria,—Nothing could have given me greater pleasure than your dear letter. I had, when I learnt your decision, almost the feeling of old Simeon: 'Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace.' Your choice has been for these last years my conviction of what might and would be best for your happiness; and just because I was convinced of it, and knew how strangely fate often changes what one tries to bring about as being the best plan one could fix upon—the *maximum* of a good arrangement—I feared that it would not happen.

"In your position, which may and will perhaps

become in future even more difficult in a political point of view, you could not exist without having a happy and agreeable *intérieur*. And I am much deceived (which I think I am not) or you will find in Albert just the very qualities and disposition which are indispensable for your happiness, and which will suit your own character, temper, and mode of life.

"You say most amiably that you consider it a sacrifice on the part of Albert. This is true in many points, because his position will be a difficult one; but much, I may say all, will depend on your affection for him. If you love him, and are kind to him, he will easily bear the bothers of his position; and there is a steadiness, and, at the same time, a cheerfulness in his character, which will facilitate this.

"I think your plans excellent. If Parliament had been called at an unusual time, it would make them uncomfortable; and if, therefore, they receive the communication at the opening of the Session, it will be best. The marriage, as you say, might then follow as closely as possible.

"LEOPOLD R."

The Prince's feelings on the occasion will best be told in the two following letters, the first written to his loved grandmother, the Dowager Duchess of Gotha:—

"Dear Grandmamma,—I tremble as I take up my pen; for I cannot but fear that what I am about to tell you will at the same time raise a thought which cannot be otherwise than painful to you, and, oh! which is very much so to me also—namely, that of parting. The subject which has occupied us so much of late is at last settled.

"The Queen sent for me alone to her room a few days ago, and declared to me, in a genuine outburst of love and affection (*Ergüsse von Herzlichkeit und Liebe*), that I had gained her whole heart, and would make her intensely happy (*überglücklich*) if I would make her the sacrifice of sharing her life with her; for she said she looked on it as a sacrifice; the only thing which troubled her was that she did not think she was worthy of me. The joyous openness of manner in which she told me this quite enchanted me, and I was quite carried away by it. She is really most good and amiable, and I am quite sure Heaven has not given me into evil hands, and that we shall be happy together.

"Since that moment Victoria does whatever she fancies I should wish or like, and we talk together a great deal about our future life, which she promises me to make as happy as possible. Oh, the future! does it not bring with it the moment when I shall have to take leave of my dear, dear home, and of you?

"I cannot think of that without deep melancholy taking possession of me.

"It was on the 15th of October that Victoria made me this declaration, and I have hitherto shrunk from telling you; but how does delay make it better?

"The period of our marriage is already close at hand. The Queen and the Ministers wish exceedingly that it should take place in the first days of February, in which I acquiesced after hearing their reasons for it.

"We have therefore fixed our departure for the 14th inst., so as to have still as much time as possible at home. We shall therefore follow close upon this letter.

"My position here will be very pleasant, inasmuch as I have refused all the offered titles. I keep my own name, and remain what I was. This will make me very independent, and makes it easy for me to run over occasionally (*einen Sprung nach der Heimath zu machen*) to see all my dear relations.

"But it is very painful to know that there will be the sea between us.

"I now take leave of you again. Victoria is writing to you herself, to tell you all she wishes.

"I ask you to give me your grandmotherly blessing in this important and decisive step in my life; it will be a talisman to me against all the storms the future may have in store for me.

"Good-bye, dear grandmamma, and do not take your love from me.

"Heaven will make all things right.

"Always and ever your devoted grandson,

"Windsor, Nov. 11, 1839.

"ALBERT.

"May I beg of you to keep the news a secret till the end of the month, as it will only then be made known here?"

The second letter is addressed to his trusted friend, Baron Stockmar, who had sent his congratulations.

"Dear Baron Stockmar,—A thousand thousand thanks for your dear, kind letter. I thought you would surely take much interest in an event which is so important for me, and which you yourself prepared.

"Your prophecy is fulfilled. The event has come upon us by surprise, sooner than we could have expected; and I now doubly regret that I have lost the last summer, which I might have employed in many useful preparations, in deference to the wishes of relations, and to the opposition of those who influenced the disposal of my life.

"I have laid to heart your friendly and kind-hearted advice as to the true foundation on which my future happiness must rest, and it agrees entirely with the principles of action which I had already privately framed for myself. An individuality, a character which shall win the respect, the love, and the confidence of the Queen and of the nation, must be the groundwork of my position. This individuality gives security for the disposition which prompts the actions; and even should mistakes occur, they will be more easily pardoned on account of that personal character; while even the most noble and beautiful undertakings fail in procuring support to a man who is not capable of inspiring that confidence.

"If, therefore, I prove a 'noble' Prince in the true sense of the word, as you call upon me to be, wise and prudent conduct will become easier to me, and its results more rich in blessings.

"I will not let my courage fail. With firm resolution and true zeal on my part, I cannot fail to continue 'noble, manly, and princely' in all things. In what I may do good advice is the first thing necessary; and that you can give better than any one, if you can only make up your mind to sacrifice your time to me for the first year of my existence here.

"I have still much to say to you, but must conclude, as the courier cannot wait longer. I hope, however, to discuss the subject more fully with you by word of mouth at Wiesbaden. Hoping that I shall then find you well and hearty, I remain yours truly,

"ALBERT."

The people who used to murmur at what they called "German influences" at the Court, in the early days of the Prince's English life, must be heartily ashamed when they learn the noble and generous sentiments revealed in the letters of the Prince and his faithful Baron Stockmar. The following letter to another German, Prince Löwenstein, is written with a frankness which will surprise those who thought the Prince incapable of the familiarities of personal friendship:—

"Yes—I am now actually a bridegroom! and about

the 4th of February hope to see myself united to her I love!

"You know how matters stood when I last saw you here. After that the sky was darkened more and more. The Queen declared to my uncle of Belgium that she wished the affair to be considered as broken off, and that for four years she could think of no marriage. I went, therefore, with the quiet but firm resolution to declare, on my part, that I also, tired of the delay, withdrew entirely from the affair. It was not, however, thus ordained by Providence; for on the second day after our arrival the most friendly demonstrations were directed towards me, and two days later I was secretly called to a private audience, in which the Queen offered me her hand and heart. The strictest secrecy was required. Ernest alone knew of it, and it was only at our departure that I could communicate my engagement to my mother.

"I think I shall be very happy; for Victoria possesses all the qualities which make a home happy, and seems to be attached to me with her whole heart.

"My future lot is high and brilliant, but also plentifully strewn with thorns. Struggles will not be wanting, and the month of March already appears to have storms in store.

"The separation from my native country—from dear Coburg—from so many friends, is very painful to me! When shall I see you again, dear Löwenstein?

"Pray show no one this letter. I write you these details, relying upon your silence, for I know your friendship for me. Now, good-bye, and think sometimes of you

"ALBERT."

"In my home life," he writes to Prince Löwenstein, in May 1840, "I am very happy and contented; but the difficulty in filling my place with the proper dignity is that I am only the husband, and not the master in the house." Pursuing this delicate topic, General Grey remarks:—

"Fortunately, however, for the country, and still more fortunately for the happiness of the royal couple themselves, things did not long remain in this condition. Thanks to the firmness, but, at the same time, gentleness with which the Prince insisted on filling his proper position as head of the family; thanks also to the clear judgment and right feeling of the Queen, as well as to her singularly honest and straightforward nature; but thanks, more than all, to the mutual love and perfect confidence which bound the Queen and Prince to each other, it was impossible to keep up any separation or difference of interests or duties between them. To those who would urge upon the Queen that, as Sovereign, she must be the head of the house and family, as well as of the State, and that her husband was after all but one of her subjects, her Majesty would reply, that she had solemnly engaged at the altar to 'obey' as well as to 'love and honour'; and this sacred obligation she could consent neither to limit nor refine away."

We must reserve for another article what relates to the public life of the Prince Consort, and the noble and wise character which he displayed in his exalted position.

REMARKABLE RAINBOWS.

THE rainbow presents, when perfect, the appearance of two concentric arches—the inner being called the *primary*, and the outer the *secondary* rainbow. Each is formed of the colours of the solar spectrum; but the colours are arranged in the reversed order, the red

forming the exterior ring of the primary bow, and interior of the secondary. The primary bow is formed by the sun's rays entering the upper part of the falling drops of rain, and undergoing two refractions and one reflection; and the secondary, by the sun's rays entering the

only a few cases are recorded. The following account, witnessed by a party of British officers during a cruise among the isles of Greece, and sketched by one of their number, describes one of the few instances on record of this most singular of rainbows:—



PRIMARY AND SECONDARY RAINBOW UNITED BY THE ARC OF A THIRD IRIS.

under part of the drops, and undergoing two refractions and two reflections. Hence the colours of the secondary bow are fainter than those of the primary.

Among remarkable rainbows are some which have been almost entirely of a blood-red colour, when the other prismatic tints have formed but an infinitesimal portion of the iris. These, in former times in Europe, and in superstitious countries at the present day, have been supposed to portend some national disaster of war, plague, or pestilence; which last prediction has been in some measure verified by natural results, where the remarkable rainbow was produced by foggy malaria, arising from the place where it appeared. On the other hand, rainbows, perfectly colourless, have been seen in mists, where the globules of moisture were too minute to refract or reflect the prismatic rays. Distorted rainbows have been seen, where the usual arc or section of a circle lost its line of beauty; and a rainbow forming a hyperbolic curve on the ground has been witnessed. Another has been seen inverted on the grass, formed by the drops of rain or dew suspended on spiders' webs in the fields. Two rainbows have been also observed at sea, where the secondary one was produced by reflection from the ocean. But the exceptional phenomenon which specially comes under our notice is where supernumerary rainbows have been observed, and which have particularly attracted the notice of meteorologists. A third iris between the primary and secondary bows, and not concentric with them, has been seen; but

"On the 28th December, 1863, I was shooting at a place called Mytica, on the coast of Akernania, Greece. At this spot there is a small plateau, extending along the coast for three or four miles, and running inland for about two miles, surrounded by irregular lofty hills. Opposite lies the Island of Calamos, at a distance from Mytica varying from half a mile to three miles, forming a sort of roadstead, in which our yacht lay. At about 2 p.m., having beaten all the covers, we went on board; and, though there was hardly any wind, we made sail, being anxious to get out where we could find a harbour, or, at least, have sea-room, for the night appeared likely to be squally. After being three hours under way, during which our yacht had barely made as many miles, just about five o'clock we perceived a heavy squall, accompanied with rain, coming down through the gorge of the hills. On this a rainbow made its appearance, of the primary form; and soon afterwards the secondary bow appeared outside, with the prismatic colours inverted, as usual. Immediately this was followed by another distinct rainbow, its colours the same in succession as the primary bow, but the segment visible formed the arc of a circle whose radius was from a perfectly different centre, as it cut both the original bow and its outer arch. It was very bright and distinct, nearly as much so as the primary iris, and more than the secondary bow. The whole phenomenon did not last long, as the sun was near setting at the time; it being mid-winter in these latitudes.

"During that day, and for many days previous, the weather had been very changeable and squally: the gusts coming continually from opposite directions, within a very short space of time, and heavy clouds flying about. Soon after we had seen this strange phenomenon, we found the weather getting so bad, with the prospect of a stormy night, that, by our captain's advice, we ran back for shelter to the place we had left. It was well that we did so; for, although it was not a regular harbour, we anchored close in shore, under the lee of the hill represented in the centre of the sketch. Here we 'housed' everything, put out two anchors, and managed to hold our ground until morning. Luckily our cables were unusually strong, and the ground good for holding. During the night we had a succession of 'white squalls,' so dangerous in the Mediterranean. From our sheltered position, we were fortunate in escaping their full violence when they swept past at intervals. Even in the darkness of the night, the water, not a hundred yards from us, was lashed into such fury by the tempest that it looked as white as cream. I believe, if we had been anchored at the opposite side of the gorge, our little craft would have suffered severely, if no accident happened to any one on board. As it was, when the wind suddenly veered round; and struck the broadside, it pitched the yacht on its beam ends, blew in the cabin windows, and our night's rest was completely spoiled. All this time the wind was from N.N.E., and continued, without variation, in that direction until next day—being considered by the sailors altogether a land-breeze, and frequent in that sea. I have sailed a good deal on the coasts of Dalmatia, Albania, and Greece, and have always found these 'white squalls' come from the land, rushing down the mountain gorges with impetuous fury, and overwhelming the barks of luckless mariners in the Mediterranean.

"I may add that there were three brother officers with me in the yacht, who witnessed this singular rainbow as well as myself—namely, Captain Germon, Lieutenant Forsden, and Lieutenant Dunn. The sketch I made at the time of occurrence, as the yacht was becalmed, and perfectly steady.

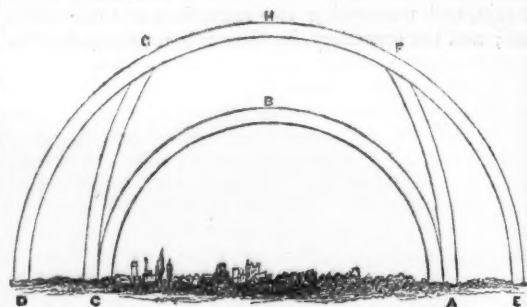
"A. J. BINGHAM WRIGHT,

"Lt. H.M. 9th Regt. of Infantry."

From the foregoing plain and lucid account, together with the circumstance that the observer was an amateur artist of no mean skill, the circumstances were most favourable for recording this appearance of a rare compound rainbow. We regret we can give only the form without the beautiful colouring of the sketch. While it is interesting to the general reader, it is particularly deserving the attention of meteorologists, who, as far as we know, have not yet satisfactorily accounted for the appearance of eccentric supernumerary rainbows, of which this is an example. In general terms, the appearance of a third iris is considered "probably the result of reflection." But we are of opinion that there are other circumstances attending the phenomenon, which lead to the conjecture that the downward force of the white squall, suddenly diverging the rain drops in their descent to a different angle, may have something to do with it. Be this as it may, we leave the solution of the problem an open question for the consideration of meteorologists.

Before leaving the subject, we shall advert to the account of a rainbow with a third eccentric iris, of a more complete form than the one described, as figured in the "Encyclopædia Metropolitana." This was seen by Dr. Halley, the eminent astronomer, from the walls of the city of Chester. The following diagram and

description of this rainbow are taken from the work above mentioned:—



"A B C and D H E were the primary and secondary rainbows as seen under ordinary circumstances. Between these was another arch, A F H G C, rising from the intersection of the horizon with the primary rainbow, and in its uppermost division dividing the secondary bow into nearly three equal parts. This intermediate arch was coloured in the same way as the primary rainbow; but during the progress of the phenomenon Halley saw the points F G rise, and the arch F G contract, till the portions of the two bows between these points were identified. The intermediate and secondary bows, having their colours contrary, produced, therefore, white between the points F and G."

THE ISLAND OF ASCENSION.

BY T. BAINE, F.R.G.S.

On the 15th May, 1865, I took leave of my numerous friends in Cape Town, and embarked for England in the Union Company's fine mail-ship "Roman." Two days later a disastrous gale, increasing to a pitch of violence unknown for many previous years, drove from their anchors nearly all the vessels riding in the bay, and strewed the beach with wrecks. The ill-fated "Athens," on losing her last anchor, steamed gallantly to seaward, and when lost sight of in the dusk of evening was supposed to be almost in safety. What happened subsequently can now be never known. Perhaps a sea, breaking on her decks as she turned westward round the point, disabled her, or drowned the fires; perhaps she drifted more than was expected: but all that can now be told is, that in the darkness of the night her form was dimly seen among the breakers, dashing furiously on the Green Point rocks. The cries of those on board were heard for hours; but nothing could be done except to light fires on the beach, and show them that, though unable to help, their fellow-men were conscious of, and sympathising with their distress; while they perished in sight of safety, leaving not a man to tell the story of their struggle with the elements, or the cause of failure.

The "Roman," leaving before the gale had attained its full strength, had gained sea-room on the first day's run, enabling her, by lying with her head off shore during the next four days, to weather it in safety, though driven far to leeward by its resistless fury.

The gale at length subsided, the ship came nearer and nearer to her proper course, and in a few days we were steaming steadily toward Saint Helena. Coasting all the afternoon along the sterile cliffs, which, as we closed with them, seemed upon our left almost to tower

overhead, we turned the successive headlands, and anchored opposite the deep ravine that affords room for the long and, as it recedes from the sea, the narrow street of James Town.

In seven days more, with favouring breezes and full steam over the tranquil sea, we obtained our first glimpse of the Island of Ascension, its higher peaks faintly appearing through the thin warm haze of the horizon, and becoming gradually more defined as the whole island assumed a deeper tint, the bluish-grey of the distance giving place to the warm local colours on the various projections. The great peak was then distinctly seen towering above the white clouds that floated round it and overshadowed the lower hills, the barren, treeless sides of which sloped, grey and destitute of vegetation, down to the precipices that overhung the sea, some dark with the native colour of the rock, and others white with the deposit of the sea-birds, large flocks of which were seen around them. Sea-swallows, gannets, and brown-plumaged man-of-war birds hovered about our vessel; while the boatswain-birds, with the long white feathers in their tails, compared by sailors to marline-spikes, floated between our masts apparently without an effort. Shoals of flying-fish occasionally rose before our bows; and porpoises, keeping way with us, gave every opportunity of watching their gambols as, with their sharp noses, they seemed to bore through the translucent waves, or rolled their arching backs and sharp dorsal fins above the surface, or sometimes, in their eagerness, leaped completely out. A fine full-rigged ship, with all her canvas crowded before the gentle breeze, preceded us; but, beautiful alike to the eye of artist or of sailor as are the swelling sails, the advantage conferred by steam was too evident, and we quickly passed and left her astern.

Passing Boatswain-bird Island, a detached cliff, white with the deposit of the sea-fowl that frequent it, and remarkable for the rushing of the sea through a cavern forming a natural arch, we rounded the north-east side of the island, and were much struck with the wild and desolate appearance of the red conical hills that flanked the sides of the great peaks. Lower down were great masses or smaller hills of lava, and next the sea long ridges of black, jagged, and irregularly-broken rocks, varied here and there by patches of sandy beach of dazzling whiteness. As we opened Clarence Bay on the north side of the island, we saw H.M.S. "Meander" anchored as a guard-ship, two smart-looking steam cruisers of the West African squadron, and the barque "Saxon," of Cape Town—the vessel seized during the late American war by the Federal steamer "Vanderbilt," on the charge of having on board the cargo of a vessel captured by the steamer "Alabama," and by her fitted out to cruise, under the name of the "Tuscaloosa," as a Confederate privateer.*

In the distance were the tall peaks of the Green Mountains, the principal of which is 2,800 feet in height, their greyish sides partially veiled by thin vapours, and looking almost green by contrast with the deep red cones in front, one of which, 1,500 feet high, is used as a signal-station. On the slope of this appeared the Mountain House, with long lines of white indicating the various enclosures or terraces around it. Other cottages were seen upon the slopes, and lower down were the

Government offices and other buildings of George Town.

We omitted the gun usually fired by mail-steamers on coming to an anchor, as I believe any noise tending to disturb the turtle which frequent the beach is specially forbidden. Their favourite haunts are left as sequestered and undisturbed as possible, private persons being restricted not only from turning turtle, but even from walking or washing where they are likely to alarm or drive away so lucrative a source of revenue to the island, and so necessary an addition to the food of the garrison and the West African squadron.

We landed at a substantial pier of stone, near which is an apparatus for condensing fresh water from the steam of salt, to add to the scanty supply afforded by the few springs on the island. Passing by the various naval storehouses and Government offices which form the greater portion of the town, some of us turned down to the beach to view the ponds in which the turtle are preserved, while others spent the interval in seeking out and purchasing such curiosities as were offered for sale. Among these the principal were small cases tastefully fitted up with rockwork and sand, and containing one or more specimens of eggs and small turtle just emerged from them, and some very delicately woven mats, brought by the kroomen of the squadron from the mainland. All that I could learn respecting these mats at the time was that they were made of the fibre of a palm leaf; but I have since seen others, brought home by Dr. Welwitsch, an enterprising German botanist who travelled in Loando in 1860, and who showed me sketches of the palm (*Raphia Hookeri*, or *Welwitschii*), in which the leaf-stems or midribs were represented as nearly forty-five feet long, while each of the leaflets was from three to five. Similar specimens were also brought by M. Du Chaillu from the Gaboon River.*

The shortness of our stay precluded the possibility of making ourselves personally acquainted with all that was worth seeing; but Mr. Bell, the botanist and head gardener, who embarked here for England, obligingly informed us of the efforts being made by Government to induce something like fertility on the more favourable localities amid this sterile wilderness of volcanic peaks.

There are no rivers in the island, although occasionally flushes rather than torrents descend after rain by the ravines; but these are of a most evanescent character. There are, however, in a ravine on the north side, springs named after Dampier, who in former times attempted to preserve his sinking vessel here; and, besides these, Middleton's springs to the west, and Palmer's more to the south.

"Water," says Sir James Alexander, "is also collected in cisterns as it distils from the rocks in the higher parts, and is conveyed six or seven miles to George Town by a system of pipes and reservoirs;" and, in addition to this, Mr. Bell informs me that an allowance is issued according to a fixed scale from the water artificially condensed.

It seems to be well understood that, in scantily-watered countries, the supply of rain and the growth of forest are mutually dependent on each other. Without rain, no trees will grow; and without trees, though clouds may gather round the mountain sides, they will not be tempted to fertilise them with their liquid treasure. In many parts of South Africa it has been known

* H.M.S. "Flora" has lately been on the station, and we are glad to find, from a recent application for books to the Christian Knowledge Society, by the Rev. James Robinson, the chaplain, that the religious comfort and rational amusement of the people of the island, as well as the sailors under his superintendence, will be attended to. About five hundred persons in all are stated to be under his charge.

* My young friend the late Richard Thornton, formerly geologist of the Zambesi expedition under Dr. Livingstone, mentioned having seen, during his journey with the late Baron Van Der Decken to Kilima-Njaro, the snowy mountain of East Africa, palm leaves which he guessed at nearly sixty feet high.

that, where a tribe of natives settle near a hill, and wastefully destroy the trees for building purposes or firewood, the little spring on which they depended for water has dried up, and the fall of rain has been diminished, there being no longer foliage to shelter the soil beneath, or to attract and imbibe moisture from the air around.*

The object of our Government is to reverse this process in Ascension, and, by bringing under cultivation every available hollow in which soil can be retained, every slope where vegetation can be made to grow, or crevice of the rocks in which trees or shrubs can strike their roots, to encourage and attract the fall of rain; and to increase, by importation of guano from Boat-swain-bird Island, and by the manure obtained by stall-feeding and slaughtering on the mountain the oxen required for the garrison, the formation of cultivable land. Attempts were made to cultivate the north-east plains about the year 1840; but, in consequence of the loss of horses, and the frequent failures of the crops, they were abandoned, being considered barren and useless. Previous to the year 1859 seeds were sent by Sir William J. Hooker, the late director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, and many patches of ground were experimented on; but the conveyance of the seeds themselves was always a matter of uncertainty and risk, and in one consignment it was found that, either from close packing, or from being too closely stowed in the hold of the vessel, they became heated and spoiled, and only one *Araucarian* pine and a few acorns germinated. Other supplies were forwarded, and every available slope or hollow is now either being actually brought into use, or likely very soon to be so.

The first, and it may be said the most important, agent in this new attempt at clothing the island with vegetation is the para grass forwarded in 1849, which is said to be doing wonders; increasing in the most astonishing manner, and growing down all weeds and inferior grasses. It has made not only a rapid growth, but resisted a drought of several months, though exposed to a tropical sun and the full force of the trade wind.

Almost, if not equally valuable, is the Australian wattle; a shrub which has been most successful, and will, in a few years, from its rapid growth and facility of propagation, change the aspect and, most probably, the climate of the island. A small layer, planted in November 1861, had increased in June 1862 to a plant seven feet in height, and thirty-six feet in circumference; and about a thousand of these had been planted during the three previous years; besides which, there is no limit to the broken ground on which it can be grown. About a thousand holes, three feet wide, and four deep, were then open for the reception of others. Butter-firkins, old boxes, preserved-meat tins, &c., were all pressed into service for laying down the small branches, and in these, after cutting, they can be carried to any distance, and will flourish much lower than any other tree or shrub.

Besides these, the Norfolk Island pine, and other Australian trees, and the Bermudean cedar, do well; but a constant supply of seeds is requisite, as few of the trees yet bear any on the island.

Loquat, guava, orange, lime, and wild fruit trees are occasionally received from the Cape of Good Hope, and from the coast. The date-palm, coffee-bush, and custard-apple are beginning to look showy in their seed-beds. Thousands of young shrubs and trees, from the Peak

down to the home gardens, are making rapid growth. Pine-apples have reached very near to perfection, and furze and bramble are filling up the ravines with luxuriant foliage, affording good cover for small game.*

The Island of Ascension, so named from having been discovered on Ascension Day 1501, by Juan de Nueva Galego, is nearly of a triangular form, eight miles long, and six broad at the west end. It is about seven hundred miles north-west of Saint Helena, and the position of the fort is latitude $7^{\circ} 55' 56''$ south, longitude $14^{\circ} 25' 5''$ west. In early times it was the occasional resort of pirates, as it lay directly in the track of the homeward-bound East India vessels; but it was not a perfectly secure retreat, as not only merchant-ships, but men-of-war occasionally visited it, to refresh their crews with the turtle found upon the beach, or the excellent fish caught in abundance near the coast. In the year 1700, Dampier, returning from his voyage to the then nearly unknown lands of Terra Australis, or New Holland, and New Guinea, found his weather-beaten vessel so leaky that, on the 23rd of February, he was obliged to run in and anchor in the bay. Here, finding no place on which he could beach the ship, and the leak being so near the keel that it could not be brought above water by careening her, he allowed the carpenter's mate to try to stop it by cutting away the timbers from inside. This, in the rotten condition of the planking, only exposed a larger aperture, through which the water gushed so violently as to defy all their efforts, and, after two days and nights of incessant labour, the gallant circumnavigator was obliged to abandon his ship and take to the shore, with one bag of rice, a puncheon, and a smaller cask of water, and as many of his books and papers as he could save. On the 26th he records the discovery of the spring about eight miles distant, beyond a high mountain which they had to pass over; but, being within half a mile of the mountain top, it was so constantly enveloped in cold fogs that living by the water was too unwholesome. About two miles south-east of the spring they found two or three shrubby trees, on one of which was cut an anchor and cable, with the date 1642; and half a furlong from these were hollow rocks, affording shelter for the men in any weather. Land crabs, boobies, and man-of-war birds, as well as the abundant progeny of goats landed by former vessels, furnished them with food.

About the time of Napoleon's exile to Saint Helena, in the year 1816, Ascension was first regularly occupied as a naval station by the British Government. A fort and Government buildings were erected, and troops stationed there. The population previous to 1855 was estimated at about 400. It has since been found a convenient rendezvous for the squadron engaged in the suppression of slavery on the west coast of Africa. During our visit we were told that, since the stoppage of blockade-running to the Confederate ports of America, vessels designed for that service had been sold and employed as

* The following extract from the last Report of the Royal Gardens at Kew, kindly sent me by Dr. J. D. Hooker, will be interesting in connection with this subject:—

"Ascension Island.

"Captain Barnard's excellent Report gives a satisfactory account of the progress of the imported vegetation in this once sterile island, which we continue to supply with plants. It now possesses thickets of upwards of forty kinds of trees, besides numerous shrubs and fruit-trees, of which, however, only the guava ripens. These already afford timber for fencing cattle-yards. I may mention that, when I visited the island in 1843, owing to the want of water, but one tree existed on it, and there were not enough vegetables to supply the commandant's table; whereas now, through the introduction of vegetation, the water-supply is excellent, and the garrison and ships visiting the island are supplied with abundance of vegetables of various kinds.

"J. D. HOOKER,

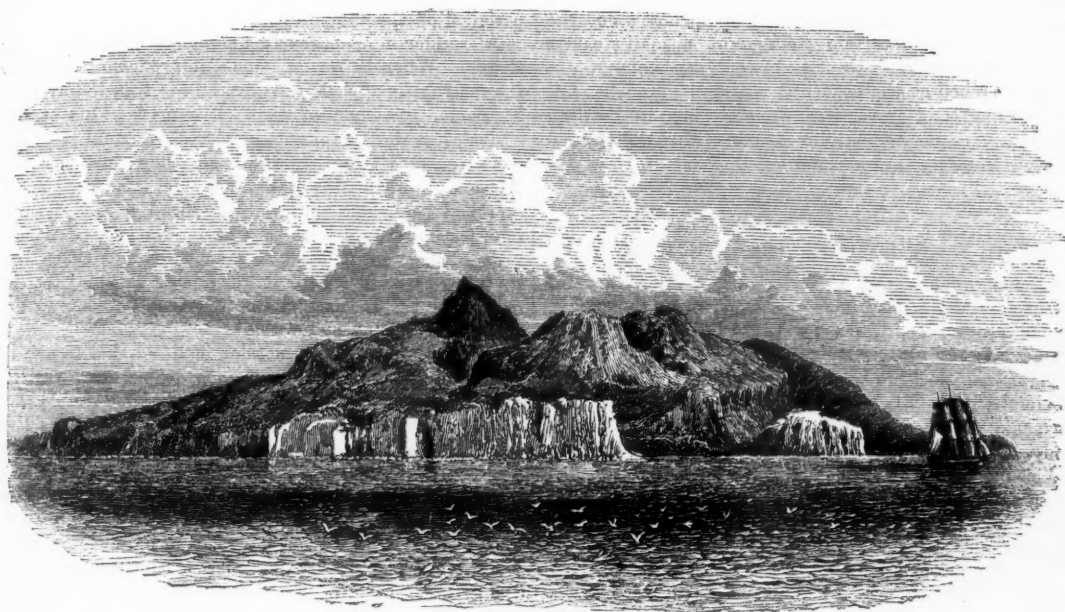
"Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew."

* Lattakoo, the station of the well-known South African missionary, Moffat, was abandoned from this cause, and Kuruman, or New Lattakoo, chosen instead.

slavers; and one of them was supposed to be so fast that none of the cruisers, except the "Battlesnake," entertained any hope of catching her.

Any description of this island would be incomplete without some notice of its chief product, the turtle, that

are seen scuttling down to the water, they never appear again here until they are four or five hundred pounds in weight,* and how long they take to attain that size, or where they spend the intermediate time, is as yet a mystery. Sometimes the turtle, which are often confined



THE ISLAND OF ASCENSION.

frequents its beaches; but, as the few hours of our stay prevented our giving to the subject the attention it deserved, I venture to become indebted to the work of Sir J. Alexander for a brief description. The "turtle-ponds," two large enclosures near the sea, which flows in and out through the interstices of a breakwater of large stones, contained at that time about three hundred turtles, of from four to five hundred pounds weight each, swimming in the ponds or basking upon the sand; and here the turtle captured upon the beach are preserved until required for shipment or for slaughter: in the latter case they are suspended by their hind-flippers to a gallows erected between the ponds, and killed as they expose their throats. In the hot months, from January to April, the females land at night, and, waddling over the sands in the various bays above high-water mark (the rise of tide being only two feet), they scrape up, by the alternate action of their flippers, holes deep enough to cover their bodies. Sighing heavily, they enter them, and each deposits one hundred and fifty to two hundred eggs. They cover them with sand, leave them for the sun to hatch, and then waddle again towards the sea. Two stout hands are meanwhile watching the movements of the unfortunate turtle, and, running up to her, one seizes a fore-flipper and dexterously shoves it under her to serve as a purchase, while the other, avoiding a stroke that might lame him, cants her over on her back, where she lies helpless. From fifteen to thirty are thus turned in a night, and in one season that is mentioned six hundred were captured. In some of the bays where the surf or heavy rollers prevent the boats from being beached to take them on board, the turtle, when caught, are hauled out to them by ropes.

From the time the young turtle, of the size of a dollar,

in the ponds for a year or upwards, without food of any kind, deposit their eggs on the sand within the enclosure, and in this case sufficient openings are made to allow the young turtle to escape. Their numbers are greatly thinned by voracious birds and fishes, and even when well grown they are not secure; for the head of a large turtle was found in a shark fourteen feet long, captured by the "Thalia" in Clarence Bay. This fact, and the number of females, from six hundred to a thousand, turned in the course of a year, Sir James apprehends may in time diminish the supply; and he suggests that measures should be adopted, such, perhaps, as the securing of a female in each of the open bays, for the capture of the males also.

The privilege of turning turtle is reserved exclusively to the Government, and the commandant is obliged to account for all that are caught during the year. The price fixed is two pounds ten shillings for each, and on this account few are purchased by merchant vessels; but some are occasionally exchanged for stores required by the garrison, for whose use and that of the squadron the greater number are reserved.

The habit of returning to its accustomed haunts seems as prevalent in the turtle as in other creatures; for one old female called Nelson, because one of her flippers had been carried off by a shark, escaped after being kept two or three years in the ponds, but was captured the next year in Clarence Bay; and another was turned there on which was carved the name of the mate of a British vessel, who had purchased and sailed with it three weeks before.

* I have caught on the surface of the water in the Gulf of Carpentaria a young turtle not larger than the palm of my hand, and have seen them of various sizes in the seas to the north of Australia.

The extremes of heat and cold are equally injurious to them, but they should always arrive in warm weather in England; and it is said that an unfortunate captain, who took two hundred from Ascension, timing his arrival badly, brought only four alive to Bristol.

On board the "Roman" we shipped a couple of fine specimens, which I believe were merely shaded from the sun, and cooled by throwing water upon them; but the short and almost certain passage of a mail-steamer would much diminish the risk of carrying them.

We touched at the beautiful island of Madeira, but did not land, and on the 20th June steamed up between the lovely scenery upon the banks of the Solent, and arrived in safety in Southampton Docks.

THE LAST OF THE PERSIAN KINGS.

THE memorable scene in history when Alexander the Great viewed the dead body of Darius, forms the subject of our frontispiece, drawn for the "Leisure Hour" by Gustave Doré.

After the decisive battle of Arbela, fought on the 1st of October, B.C. 331, Darius fled over the mountains of Armenia, attended by some of his relatives and a small body of guards. In Armenia he was joined by 2,000 Greek mercenaries who had escaped the slaughter.

Alexander took the city of Arbela, where he seized on immense sums of money, with all the rich furniture and equipage of Darius, and then returned to his camp.

The conqueror rested but a few days, and then proceeded to Babylon, which he entered at the head of his victorious army. Here he received recruits, to the number of 2,000 horse and 13,500 foot, under the command of Amyntas; and after a stay of about thirty days in Babylon, during which time the people abandoned themselves to pleasures of the grossest nature, Alexander marched towards Susa. As he approached the city, Abulites, governor of the place, sent his son to meet him, with a promise to surrender the city into his hands, with all the treasures of Darius. The young nobleman conducted Alexander to the river Choaspes, where Abulites himself met him, and performed his promise.

Leaving a strong garrison in Susa, Alexander crossed the river Pasi Tigris (the modern Jerahi), and subdued the country of the Uxii.

He then ordered Parmenio to march with part of his army through the plain, while he himself, at the head of his light-armed troops, crossed the mountains, which extend as far as Persia. On the fifth day he arrived at the pass of Susa. Ariobarzanes, with 4,000 foot and 700 horse, had possessed himself of this pass, and he had so posted his little band that they were out of the reach of arrows. As soon as Alexander advanced in order to attack them, they rolled from the top of the mountains stones of a prodigious size, which, rebounding from rock to rock, smote down whole ranks. The conqueror was astounded, and gave orders for a retreat. He withdrew about thirty furlongs, where he lay encamped some time, afraid to proceed and ashamed to return. His pride was about to be humbled, and his career of victory checked, when a Greek deserter, coming to his camp, offered to conduct him through by-paths to the top of the mountains, whence he might compel the Persians to retreat. Accordingly, Alexander, at the head of some chosen troops, having followed his guide by night over rocks and precipices, arrived a little before day-break at the top of a mountain which commanded all the hills where the enemy was posted. A charge was made, and they fled; and Craterus, who had been left

in the camp below, advancing with the troops, possessed himself of the pass. Ariobarzanes, with part of the cavalry, breaking through the Macedonians (by which act many were slaughtered on both sides), made his escape over the mountains, designing to throw himself into Persepolis; but he was chased back again by the enemy below, and he, with most of his valiant band, perished on the mountains.

Alexander now pursued his march into Persis, or Persia. When he was at some distance from Persepolis, the metropolis of that province, he received letters from Tiridates, governor of that city, urging his speedy arrival, lest the inhabitants of the city should seize the treasures of Darius, to which act they were inclined. Alexander, upon this news, left his infantry behind, marched the whole night at the head of his cavalry, and, passing the Araxes by a bridge he had previously ordered to be made, came to Persepolis, and there took up his winter quarters. It was during this stay that he destroyed the palace, having previously given up the town to be sacked by his soldiers.

The spring found Alexander again on his march in quest of Darius. That unhappy prince had still an army of 30,000 foot, among whom were 4,000 Greeks who continued faithful to his cause. Besides these, he had 4,000 slingers and upwards of 3,000 cavalry, most of them Bactrians, commanded by Bessus, governor of the province of Bactriana. All these declared that they were ready to follow him whithersoever he should go, and would shed the last drop of blood in his defence. But there were traitors in the camp. Nabarzanes, one of the greatest lords of Persia, and general of the horse, conspired with Bessus to seize upon the person of the king, and put him in chains. Their design was, if Alexander should pursue them, to secure themselves by giving up Darius alive into his hands; and, in the event of their escape from the conqueror, to murder Darius, usurp his crown, and begin a new war. The traitors then won over the troops, by representing to them that they were going to certain destruction; that they would soon be crushed under the ruins of an empire already shaken to its foundation; while at the same time Bactriana was open to them, and offered them immense riches. These intrigues were carried on with great secrecy; but, nevertheless, they came to the ears of Darius, and he would not believe them. In vain did Patroon, who commanded the Greeks, entreat him to pitch his tent among them, and to trust the guard of his person with men on whose fidelity he might depend. He replied that it would be a less affliction to him to be deceived by than to condemn the Persians; that he would suffer the worst of evils amidst those of his own nation, rather than seek for security among strangers, how faithful and affectionate soever he might believe them; and that he could not die too soon, if the Persian soldiers considered him unworthy of life. Darius was soon undeceived; the traitors seized him, bound him in chains of gold, by way of honour, and, putting him in a covered chariot, they marched towards Bactriana.

In the meantime Alexander advanced rapidly towards Media. He reached that province in twelve days, moving nearly forty miles each day. In three days more he reached Ecbatana, where he was informed that Darius had retired from thence five days before, with intent to pass into the remotest provinces of his empire. He then commanded Parmenio to lay up all the treasures of Persia (which, according to Strabo and Justin, amounted to about £30,000,000 sterling, exclusive of the rich gifts Alexander had munificently given at various periods to his followers) in the castle of Ecbatana, under a strong

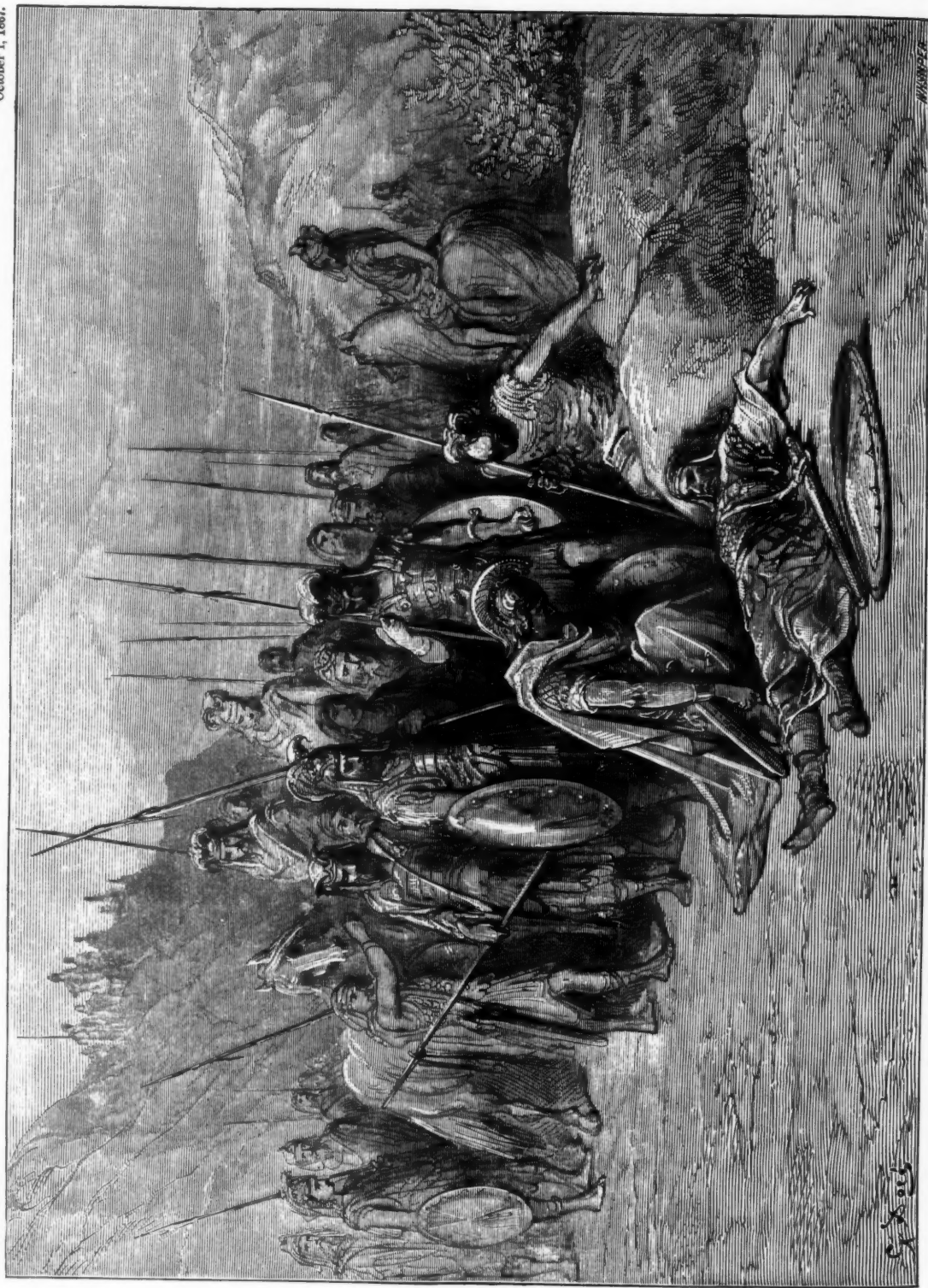
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ALEXANDER'S WEEKLY MESSENGER

guard, which he left there. Alexander, with the rest of his army, pursued Darius, and arrived the eleventh day at Rhages, where he halted some days to settle the affairs of Media.

From Rhages Alexander marched into Parthia, and encamped the first day at a small distance from the Caspian Straits. He passed those straits the next day, and he had scarcely entered Parthia when he was informed of the conspiracy against Darius.

This was a fresh motive for Alexander to hasten his march. At length he overtook them; and the barbarians, on his arrival, were seized with consternation. The name and reputation of Alexander, a force powerful in war, filled them with such terror that they universally betook themselves to flight, notwithstanding their number exceeded that of the pursuer. Bessus and his accomplices requested Darius to mount his horse, and flee from the enemy; but he replied that the gods were ready to avenge the evils he had suffered; and, invoking Alexander to do him justice, he refused to follow them. At these words, full of rage, they discharged their darts at the unhappy monarch, and left him wounded to the mercy of the Macedonians. This done, they separated, Bessus fleeing towards Hyrcania and Nabarzanes into Bactria, hoping thereby to elude the pursuit of the enemy, or oblige him to divide his forces. Their hosts dispersed themselves up and down, as fear or hope directed their steps, and many thousands were slain.

In the meantime the horses that drew the cart in which the once mighty Darius was seated, halted, for the drivers had been killed by Bessus, near a village about half a mile from the highway. Polystratus, a Macedonian, being pressed with thirst in the pursuit of the enemy, was soon after conducted by the inhabitants to refresh himself at an adjacent fountain. As he was filling his helmet with water, he heard the groans of a dying man, and, looking round, discovered a cart, in which, on drawing near, he found the unhappy monarch. The hunters had long pursued him, and they found him at length in the agonies of death. He had yet strength sufficient to call for a little water, which, when he had taken, he turned to the Macedonian, and with a faint voice said that, in the deplorable state to which he was reduced, it was no small consolation to him that his last words would not be lost. He therefore charged him to tell Alexander that he died in his debt, without having had the power of returning his obligations; that he thanked him for the kindness he had shown to his mother, wife and children; that he besought the gods to give victory to his arms, and make him master of the universe; and that he thought he need not entreat him to revenge the traitorous death he suffered, as this was the common cause of kings. Then, taking Polystratus by the hand, he added: "Give Alexander your hand, as I give you mine; and carry him, in my name, the only pledge I am able to give, in this condition, of my gratitude and affection." Having uttered these words, Darius expired in the arms of Polystratus.

Alexander, it is said, coming up soon after, and beholding on the ground the dead body of the fallen monarch, burst into tears, and bewailed the cruel lot of a prince who, he observed, was worthy of a better end.

Alexander pulled off his military cloak and threw it over the body; then, causing it to be embalmed, and the coffin to be adorned with regal magnificence, he sent it to Sisigambis, that it might be interred with the ancient Persian monarchs.

Such was the end of Darius Codomannus. He died in the fiftieth year of his age, and sixth of his reign.

He was a mild and pacific prince, his reign having been unsullied with injustice, cruelty, or any of those vices to which some of his predecessors had been greatly addicted.

In Darius Codomannus the Persian empire ended, after having existed from the reign of the first Cyrus, under thirteen kings, from B.C. 536 to B.C. 331, dating from the time of the annexation of the Babylonian empire to that of the Medes and Persians.

ARBROATH AND MONTROSE.

TOURISTS in Scotland usually keep to certain well-known and popular routes, being dependent on the arrangements of railway and steamboat companies who know the chief points of attraction. In the lowlands the scenes brought into fame by the genius of Scott or of Burns, and in the highlands the grandeur of natural scenery, determine the course of southern travellers. But there are in "broad Scotland" many places full of both natural and historical interest besides those most commonly visited. The meeting of the British Association this autumn at Dundee brought many strangers to a region rich in associations of the past, especially the county of Forfar.

The town of Arbroath is remarkable chiefly, if not solely, for the famous ruins of its once more famous Abbey. This noblest of our Scottish abbeys was founded and endowed by William the Lion in the year 1178, and was dedicated to St. Thomas A'Becket, who was slain at the altar of his own cathedral at Canterbury eight years previously. The abbey received, from time to time, large grants of lands, privileges, and patronages, till, in a century or so after its foundation, it became the wealthiest and every way most powerful in the kingdom, with the exception only of St. Andrews. It had kings and all their retinue for its guests; and its revenues were princely—we might say kingly—to enable them to be munificent in their hospitality. Many important national assemblages were held within its ample walls; and at many a critical juncture events were visibly swayed by the result of deliberation carried on in Arbroath Abbey. In 1320 the Scottish nobles met here and drew up a remonstrance to the Pope against the claims of the English Edward II to the crown. The following extract will convey a dim idea to the reader of its princely ongoing at a later period:—"In 1561-2 the money revenue of the abbey was about £3,064, besides upwards of 422 chalders of victuals, 37 barrels of salmon, besides services, kane, capons, and other perquisites. Still, notwithstanding the largeness of these revenues, it appears that in 1530, two years after King James's visit, when there is no word of princes or other great personages visiting the abbey, these payments in kind were not only insufficient for the maintenance of the monks and their visitors, but an extra purchase was made of 800 wedders, 180 oxen, 11 barrels of salmon, 1,500 dried codfish 'for fast days,' and 52 chalders of victuals. The reasons for this enormous excess of expenditure are not very clearly accounted for by any document now extant." The abbey church was begun to be built in 1178, but was not finished till 1233. It was in the early English, or first pointed style of Gothic architecture. The church was 269 feet long, and the nave and side aisles were 65 feet broad, and about 69 feet high. There is nothing of it left saving fragments of the nave and choir, the east and west ends, and the south transept. There are abundant relics and traditions of the past; but of them we cannot now and here

speak. Previous to the Reformation, from a variety of causes, the abbey was decaying and its buildings becoming dilapidated. The Reformation finished the work of decay. The last abbot was the famous Cardinal Beaton. The property was, after the Reformation, vested in the Panmure family; but that peerage was attained in 1716, since which period the ruins have been vested in the Commissioners of Woods and Forests. That honourable board paid no attention whatever to its trust, and the ruins became the common quarry for the neighbourhood. In 1773 the ruins, then much more extensive than now, were visited by Dr. Samuel Johnson, who said "he should scarcely have regretted he journey to Scotland had it afforded nothing more than the sight of the ruins of the Abbey of Arbroath." Since 1815 the Commissioners of Woods and Forests have wakened up to a sense of their responsibility, and from time to time have made grants for putting and keeping what remains of the ruins in repair.

From Arbroath it is but a short run to Montrose, an ancient borough also full of historical interest. Hence Sir James Douglas set sail on his pilgrimage to the Holy Land with the heart of King Robert the Bruce. Here landed the Pretender in 1715 from the French fleet which brought him to Scotland, and at the same place, two months later, in 1716, he embarked, having slept the night before in the house where the celebrated Marquis of Montrose was born. The modern town is one of the cleanest and neatest in Scotland, and the inhabitants are justly proud of the fine suspension bridge which crosses the south Esk with a span of 432 feet.

Eight miles west of Montrose is Brechin, another royal borough, the seat in ancient times of an abbey of the Culdees, and long after of a bishopric, founded in 1150 by King David I. The ruins of the cathedral have been marred by being "repaired" as a modern place of worship. Very little additional expense might have secured present benefit without destroying an archaeological monument. Brechin boasts one of the few round towers, which are so frequent in Ireland.

Brechin Castle is the seat of the Earl of Dalhousie, now the representative of the Panmure peerage, which was restored in 1831. Panmure House, too, the ancient seat of his lordship's family, bids fair soon to be one of the noblest mansions in Scotland. It was built in 1680 near the ruins of the still older seat; and there is, among other things there to be seen, one of the finest private libraries in the kingdom, specially rich in rare manuscripts.

About twelve miles from Arbroath, and twenty-four from Dundee Harbour, is the celebrated Inch Cape Rock. It is also called Bell Rock, from a bell formerly suspended there by the abbots of Aberbrothock, which being rung by the waves gave warning of the perilous reef. A noted pirate, Ralph the Rover, is said to have cut the bell from the framework, and received just punishment for his malice by being wrecked on the spot. Southey has embodied this incident in a popular poem. The lighthouse now on the rock is one of the finest and most useful beacons on the Scottish coast. It was erected at a cost of £60,000. In the album kept in the lighthouse, Sir Walter Scott wrote these lines in 1815:—

"Far on the bosom of the deep,
O'er these wild shelves my watch I keep;
A ruddy gem of changeful light,
Bound on the dusky brow of night;
The seaman bids my lustre hail,
And scorns to strike his tim'rous sail."

Varieties.

QUEENSLAND.—A young English emigrant writes thus from Brisbane:—"We have arrived safe, but I fear we have only escaped the dangers of the deep to step upon a shore where dangers are more numerous. We never made a greater mistake in our lives than in coming here; for, instead of a 'land of milk and honey,' as represented, it is a miserable, wretched, cheerless place, even though you had plenty of money: as to work, you might as well try to fly to the moon as obtain it here. There are hundreds of poor fellows prowling about who would be willing and glad to work for their keep alone, and can't get it. Things here are in a perfect state of stagnation. We have tried all we know to get something to do, but have failed. Moreton Bay is a splendid bay, with several islands in it; though lying there for three days, we could not manage a visit to any of them; the water is of a light pea-green colour, and very bright. We left the ship at two o'clock, and after a run of two hours up the Brisbane, which is a very winding and pretty river, the scenery in some parts reminding me much of dear old England, we arrived at the town—such a town! Nearly all the houses are made of wood; there is only one street worth calling a street, and that for walking is more like one of our country lanes; there are a few nice shops, but that's all; and if any one was to ask me what Brisbane was celebrated for, I should say, its few churches, the great number of public-houses, its bad roads, and the noise the frogs make."

COURTS OF CONCILIATION.—The Act to establish equitable councils of conciliation to adjust differences between masters and workmen, after reciting the 5th of George IV, c. 96, and the other Acts to amend the same, declares that, in order the better to facilitate the settlement of disputes between masters and workmen, it is expedient, without repealing the several Acts, that masters and workmen should be enabled, when licensed by her Majesty, to form equitable councils of conciliation or arbitration, and that the powers of the Acts for enforcing awards made under or by virtue of the provisions should be extended to the enforcing the awards to be made by and under the authority of such equitable councils of conciliation. The mode of procedure is for a number of masters and workmen in a locality to call a meeting, and agree to form a council of conciliation and arbitration, and to petition her Majesty or the Secretary of State to grant a license, which may be done after notice in the newspapers. A council is not to consist of less than two nor more than ten masters and workmen and a chairman, and the petitioners for a license are to proceed to the appointment of a council from among themselves within thirty days after such grant of license, and the council is to remain in office until the appointment of a new council in its stead. The council is to have power to determine questions submitted to it and to enforce its awards, as mentioned in the first recited Act, by an application to a magistrate, by distress, sale, or imprisonment. No council under the Act is to establish a rate of wages or price of labour or workmanship at which the workmen shall in future be paid. A committee of conciliation is to be appointed by a council. "No counsel, solicitors, or attorneys to be allowed to attend on any hearing before the council or committee of conciliation unless consented to by both parties." Household and part occupiers may demand to be registered and to have a vote for the council, and may be elected thereto. A registry is to be kept, and the masters and workmen are to elect the council. The forms to be used in carrying out the Act, and to enforce the awards of the councils on the questions "submitted to them by both parties," appear in the Act.

TEMPORAL POWER OF THE POPE.—The Church of Rome thrives nowhere more prodigiously than in those free countries in which she only enjoys the blessings of equal toleration and shares it with all other creeds and confessions. It is full time that those peaceful means of spontaneous persuasion which, if we may believe her own priests and bishops, win her such splendid victories in England or the United States, should be employed in Italy and in Rome itself, where, perhaps, they may lead to more satisfactory results than Antibes Legions or Dumont missions. The Papacy has tried sovereign power for a thousand years, and the result is a paltry territory with a beggared population, a bankrupt treasury, and a nest of brigands. If it has not yet learnt that "its kingdom is not of this world," that salutary lesson should be no longer delayed.—*Times*.